3/8/2021

Written Testimony in support of Committee Bill No 753: "*To provide for the adjustment of population data so as to count incarcerated persons as residents of their last town of residence rather than as residents of the town in which the correctional facility is located*" and Committee Bill No. 5318: "*An Act Restoring Electoral Privileges to Convicted Felons Who are On Parole*".

Submitted via email.

Dear Chairs, Ranking Members and Members of the General Administration and Elections Committee:

I write in support of Committee Bill 753 to discontinue the practice of counting incarcerated persons as residents of the town of the location of the prison. This practice is often referred to as "prison-based gerrymandering". Incarcerated persons should be attributed to the town of their last known residential address as Bill No. 753 provides.

I am a member of the League of Women Voters. The League of Women Voters of CT (LWVCT) supports Bill No. 753 on the basis of its support for population-based apportionment as well as its position on Voting Rights which recognizes that reapportionment should not dilute effective representation of minority citizens.

The current enumeration practice simultaneously distorts the true population basis on which apportionment should rest and creates a race-based gerrymander by diluting the effective representation of communities of color.

Further, it should be noted that this effect itself stems from multiple forms of structural racism including policies, like town zoning laws, that create and replicate geographic racial segregation, and the overpolicing of communities of color.

Like the LWVCT, I also support Committee Bill No. 5318, to restore electoral privileges to convicted felons on parole. Voting rights are the keystone of representative democracy. Voting should be accessible and available to all eligible citizens and elected bodies should seek to expand rather than contract voting rights and make voting as easy and available as possible.

Sincerely,

Joan E. Twiggs
Bloomfield, CT 06002